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preliminary list*
OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA
UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF
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SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Identical letters dated 20 May 1997 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copies of two letters of protest, Nos. 034/04/80-573 and 034/04/80-574, dated 4 May 1997, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates addressed to the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran at Abu Dhabi. They concern the statement made by Mr. Abdullah Muhammad Hashim, Deputy Minister of Roads and Transport in the Islamic Republic of Iran, published in the newspaper Hamshirin, No. 1237, on 22 April 1997, which constitutes:

1. A flagrant violation by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran of the memorandum of understanding concluded between the two countries in 1971 with respect to the island of Abu Musa, the imposition of an illegal status quo, and an attempt to consolidate its occupation of the island and place it under Iranian sovereignty by force. No rights over this island have accrued to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

2. A flagrant violation of the principles of international law and of the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over Greater Tunb. In accordance with the established precepts of international law which hold that the acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible and that occupation gives the occupying Power no rights in the territory subjected to it by force, no rights over this island have accrued to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

* A/52/50.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 39 and 148 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Khalid Khalifa AL-MUALLA
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

ANNEX I

Note verbale dated 4 May 1997 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates to the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran at Abu Dhabi

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates wishes to inform the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran that its construction of an airport on the island of Abu Musa, which belongs to the United Arab Emirates, constitutes a flagrant violation by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran of the memorandum of understanding concerning the island of Abu Musa concluded between the two countries in 1971. The construction was announced by Mr. Abdullah Muhammad Hashim, Deputy Minister of Roads and Transport in the Islamic Republic of Iran with responsibility for the building and expansion of ports and airports, and the announcement was published in the newspaper Hamshirin, No. 1237, on 22 April 1997. Such action constitutes the imposition of an illegal status quo and an attempt to consolidate the occupation of the island and place it under Iranian sovereignty by force.

The Government of the United Arab Emirates wishes to inform the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran of its vigorous objections to this illegal act. It considers this and all previous actions taken by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the island of Abu Musa to be unjustified acts of provocation. No rights over this island have accrued to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The United Arab Emirates reaffirms its sovereignty over the island of Abu Musa and its refusal to recognize the sovereignty of any other State over that island. It reserves all its rights over the island of Abu Musa.

ANNEX II

Note verbale dated 4 May 1997 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates to the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran at Abu Dhabi

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates wishes to inform the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran that its construction of an airport on the island of Greater Tunb, which belongs to the United Arab Emirates and has been occupied by the Islamic Republic of Iran since 1971, constitutes a flagrant violation by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran of the principles of international law and of the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over the island of Greater Tunb. The construction was announced by Mr. Abdullah Muhammad Hashim, Deputy Minister of Roads and Transport in the Islamic Republic of Iran with responsibility for the building and expansion of ports and airports, and the announcement was published in the newspaper Hamshirin, No. 1237, on 22 April 1997. In accordance with the established precepts of international law which hold that the acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible and that occupation gives the occupying Power no rights in the territory subjected to it by force, no rights over this island have accrued to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Government of the United Arab Emirates wishes to inform the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran of its vigorous objections to this illegal act. It considers this and all previous actions taken by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the island of Abu Musa and the occupied islands of Greater and Lesser Tunb to be unjustified acts of provocation. No rights over these islands have accrued to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The United Arab Emirates reaffirms its sovereignty over its three islands and its refusal to recognize the sovereignty of any other State over them. It reserves all its rights over these islands.